

What is claimed:

1. A method for treating or preventing ulcerative colitis and other associated diseases in target cells, comprising administering a compound to the target cells, wherein said compound inhibits interaction between CEP and hTM.
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2. The method of claim 1, wherein the compound inhibits the interaction between CEP and hTM by physically binding to either CEP or hTM within the target cell.
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3. The method of claim 2, wherein the compound is a recombinant protein that comprises a functional hTM binding site from CEP.
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4. The method of claim 1, wherein the compound causes a decreased expression of the CEP protein in the target cells.
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5. The method of claim 1, wherein the compound prevents secretion of the CEP-hTM complex.
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6. The method of claim 5, wherein the compound affects either cytoskeletal organization or active secretion.
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7. The method of claim 5, wherein the compound is either phorbol-12-myristate-13-acetate, monensin or methylamine.
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8. A method to treat or prevent ulcerative colitis and other associated diseases, comprising administering a recombinant protein that comprises a functional hTM binding site from CEP, wherein said functional binding site is operably linked to a non-antigenic protein.
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9. A method to screen for drugs that are useful for treating ulcerative colitis and other associated diseases, comprising administering a drug to

human colon cancer cells and determining the amount of CEP-hTM complex, a decrease in CEP-hTM complex being indicative of therapeutic value of the drug.

10. The method of claim 9, wherein the amount of CEP-hTM complex is determined by quantifying the amount of hTM secreted from the colon cancer cells.

11. The method of claim 10, wherein the colon cancer cells are LS-180 cells.

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12. A diagnostic method for detecting diseases associated with an autoantigen response to hTM in affected tissue, comprising detecting CEP-hTM complexes in the affected tissue, the presence of CEP-hTM complexes being indicative of the disease.

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13. The method of claim 12, wherein the CEP-hTM complexes are detected in the extracellular space of the affected tissue.

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14. The method of claim 12, wherein the CEP-hTM complexes are detected in intracellular space of the affected tissue.

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15. The method of claim 12, wherein the tissue is the colon epithelium.